

Institutional Effectiveness and Improve Plans

Frequently Asked Questions

If I make a recommendation on my IE plan, am I forced to implement it?

Departments feel that if they made a past recommendation for their IE plan, they are forced to follow it regardless of what occurs after the recommendation. Departments can choose to not implement recommendations due to a change in directives, personnel, circumstances, etc., A description of the final decision/action is expected to be entered in the annual "Follow up" section in Improve. The response is listed as a Follow-up to the original recommendation.

Do I have to keep my current outcomes, assessments and criterion statements for 5 years? Am i not allowed to change them?

Academic degree programs and administrative departments function in a dynamic environment that can be unpredictable. You have the flexibility to shift your IE plan as situations arise or make new improvements as needed. The plans should be reflective of actual outcomes. Changing leadership and demands may call for a shift in outcomes, and the Improve plans can reflect those changes if reasons are provided. Outdated outcomes can be "completed" in Improve and new outcomes opened as "active" if reasons are documented for the change within Improve. However, the Office of University Accreditation recommends that there should be continuity in outcomes from year to year for comparisons.

If I meet my criterion year after year, do I have to find a new outcome and assessment method?

If an outcome continually meets the criterion, you have the option to: 1.) increase the criterion statement (raise the bar), 2.) implement a more reliable assessment method, 3) close the outcome and find a new outcome to measure improvements. SACSCOC is less concerned that the criterion standard is met annually, and more concerned on a department's ability to demonstrate continuous improvement actions. Your IE plan demonstrates your ability to implement data-informed recommendations where improvement is needed. Meeting a low standard each year does not demonstrate this ability.

Do I have to score a 100 on my IE plan each year?

To be compliant with annual Institutional Effectiveness planning, plans must score an overall average of 70 or above on their peer reviewed rubric.

It is a problem if I don't meet my criterion each year?

Departments should be able to justify why a specific criterion standard has been selected. This should be an aspirational, quantitative measurement. SACSCOC is less concerned that the criterion standard is met annually, and more concerned on a department's ability to demonstrate continuous improvement actions. Your IE plan demonstrates your ability to implement data-informed recommendations where improvement is needed. Meeting a low standard each year does not demonstrate this ability.

I don't understand why this outcome or criterion statement has been set for my office, or we don't do this anymore. It doesn't make sense to me, but I have been told I can't change it. Is that true?

You have the flexibility to shift your IE plan as situations arise or new outcomes are needed. The plans should represent the current expected outcomes of the department related to its mission and span of control or the learning outcomes of the academic program. The outcomes, assessment and criterion should be based on data that is meaningful to the decisionmakers to make data-informed decisions on improvement.

Do I need to have all my expected unit outcomes in Improve.?

Institutional Effectiveness peer reviewers only review three active outcomes each year. You can enter as many outcomes as you wish, but you will only be scored on the first three active outcomes.